

# 100 care packages destined for military personnel

Deborah Dunn, *Fluor Hanford*

Employees of the Fluor Hanford Central Plateau Remediation Project and Project Operations Center donated, packaged and mailed 100 gift boxes for U.S. troops stationed in the Middle East.

"This was a great way to recognize U.S. military personnel for their service to our country," said Larry Olguin, vice president of the Central Plateau Remediation Project. "The employees took the initiative to prepare packages for our troops, and this activity aligns with our company's encouragement that we acknowledge U.S. military personnel."

Paul Pimentel, of the Project Operations Center said, "Our employees have been very generous with their donations of food, personal-care items, packaging materials and money for postage, as well as notes and letters of encouragement."



**Pitching in on April 18 to help assemble 100 gift packages for members of the U.S. armed forces are Anita Hall (foreground), Larry Olguin and Laurie Ann Robinson of the Central Plateau Remediation Project.**

The project started with Doug Wertz, Control Team manager for the Central Plateau Remediation Project and a U.S. Navy reservist. Anita Hall, a secretary for the CP Project, volunteered to coordinate the effort.

Wertz said 40 members of his reserve group — eight women and 32 men — were called into active duty in mid-February. They comprise a cargo-handling unit responsible for loading and off-loading cargo while serving on a bulk cargo-carrying ship, the *S.S. Cape Johnson T-AK 5075*. Ships haul 90 percent of the supplies and materials supporting military activities.

The 1950s-era ship was taken out of "mothballs" — protective storage — and placed back into active duty. It is operated by 18 merchant marines. The initial run, a military mission, was to a port in Iraq. The ship has since been moving back and forth across the Pacific Ocean, and as the degree of hostility decreases, Wertz said, its mission is shifting to providing humanitarian aid. He explained that the old ship lacks modern amenities — no store, and no satellite linkups for computers or e-mail.

"Letters from home are few and far between," Wertz said. "You might get into port about every three weeks to receive mail. If we can send them something to break the monotony or save them from having to buy essentials, it really makes a difference."

The care-package effort easily surpassed the goal of 40 — not only will each of the 40 reservists receive a package, but the merchant marines will too. The rest of the care packages are destined for ground troops in Iraq. Hall said two boxes, each containing a number of packages, were mailed to individuals — Mark Nobbs, the son of Jack Nobbs of Central Plateau; and Hall's family friend Jeremy Asmus, serving on the front lines.

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Military recommendations were used in preparing the packages. Security restrictions now require mail be sent to individuals; the former practice of mailing "to any serviceman" has been discontinued. In addition, various items are disallowed by cultural taboos.

On the list of acceptable and high-demand personal-care items were toothpaste, disposable razors, waterless hand sanitizer, and travel-size soap and shampoo. Edibles able to withstand lengthy shipping and desert heat are hard candy, licorice, chewing gum, pre-sweetened powdered juice mixes, herbal teas, pre-packaged cookies, condiments, and snack chips.

Recommended items and enough money to pay shipping costs of about \$5 per package were donated, and care packages were inspected to ensure compliance with military-security recommendations. Notes or letters were added.

The effort began April 2 and the packages were assembled for mailing on April 18. ■